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A
S E R M O N

Preach'd before
The Right Honourable
THE
LORD MAYOR,
ALDERMEN,
AND
Governors of the several City-
Hospitals.

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A T
St. *B R I G I T*'s,
On Tuesday in Easter-Week, April 26, 1709.

By *FRANCIS ATTERBURY*, D. D. Dean
of Carlisle, Preacher at the Rolls, and Chaplain
in Ordinary to Her MAJESTY.

L O N D O N:

Printed for Henry Clements, at the Half-Moon, in
St. Paul's Church-yard. 1709.

1709

Duncombe Mayor.

*Martis iii^o die Maii 1709. Annoq; R. R^{ae}
Annæ Magnæ Britanniz, &c. Octavo.*

THIS Court doth desire Dr. At-
terbury, Dean of Carlisle, to Print
his Sermon Preached at the Pa-
rish Church of Saint Bride, on Tues-
day in Easter Week last, before the
Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Gover-
nors of the several Hospitals of this
City.



Gibson.

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
Sir Charles Duncombe,
Lord Mayor of LONDON.

MY LORD,

I Send this Sermon, now Printed, to Your Lordship, at whose earnest and repeated Desire I Preach'd it; for whom I profess my self, on many accounts, to have a particular Regard; and whom I shall, at all times, be ready, in all Christian Services, to obey.

Illness, and other Reasons, with which it is unnecessary to trouble the World, or Your Lordship, have so long retarded the Publication of this Discourse, that it may seem less proper, and seasonable, in One or Two Passages of it: Those, I mean, where a near Prospect of Peace is mention'd. For it hath pleas'd God, since it was Preach'd, to remove that great
Blessing

The DEDICATION.

Blessing farther from us, and place it more out of sight: not, I hope, without a merciful Intention of giving us, in his good time, what we have not now ask'd in such a solemn manner as became us; and of enhancing the Value of the Gift, by the Delay of it. I am sure, how long soever we may wait for it, it will be bestowed much sooner than we shall deserve it.

My Lord,

The Subject of this Discourse, is Charity; and the Design of it is, to stir up the Minds of those, whom God's good Providence hath bless'd with great Abundance; and, by that means, with a Power of blessing many others. On this account (without other Considerations) I could not have pitch'd on a Name, to which I might have inscrib'd it more properly than that of your Lordship. I offer it to You, my Lord, with all the Respect that becomes me; and with hearty Wishes, that the earthly Felicities you possess, may, by your wise and good Use of them, lead to the Enjoyment of those which are eternal. I am

Your Lordship's

Most Obedient Humble Servant,

June 11.
1709.

Francis Atterbury.

A S P I T A L S E R M O N:

Preach'd before the
Right Honourable the Lord-Mayor
and Court of Aldermen, &c.

L U K E X. 32.

*He came, and looked on him, and passed by on the
other side.*

TH E S E Words are part of our Saviour's Parable, concerning the Traveller, that *fell among Thieves; who stripp'd, and wounded him, and left him half dead.* It happen'd, that some Passengers soon afterwards came that way, and, among the rest, a Levite; who, hearing the Groans of the wounded Person, or, perhaps, having an obscure view of him at a distance, came nearer to inform himself more particularly of the Matter: And, when he had done so, stay'd not to assist, or comfort that miserable Man; but retir'd immediately, and pursu'd his Journey. *He came, and looked on*
B *him,*

him, and passed by on the other side. It seems to be intimated in these Words, that this Passenger felt some degree of Concern, at the sight of so moving an Object, and therefore withdrew himself in haste, as not being willing to indulge it. Doubtless, he was not void of all Compassion, nor wholly ignorant of his Duty in such a Case; but he made a shift to excuse himself from the necessity of performing it. "His Journey might require the utmost haste, and why should he interrupt it to no Purpose? For he could be of no use to the wounded Person, nor had any manner of Skill in Surgery: It was possible, that the same Band of Robbers might light upon *Him* also, if he stay'd longer in that Place; or, perhaps, there might be a Feint, a Contrivance in the Matter, to draw him into some secret Ambush." By such Pretences as these he seems to have satisfy'd himself, and stifled the Sentiments, which Natural Pity and Religion could not but suggest to him: *He came, and looked on the stripp'd and wounded Traveller, and passed by on the other side.* A lively Image, this, of the Indifference and Neglect, with which too many of us, too often look on real Objects of Charity; and of the *Excuses*, by which we endeavour to justify such Neglects, and to deceive our selves into an Opinion, that they are not Culpable! It shall be my Business, in what follows, to consider the *Pleas*, that are commonly made use of to this Purpose, and to shew

shew the *Insufficiency*, and *Weakness* of them. For, indeed, These are the most ordinary, and most effectual Impediments to the Exercise of Charity. 'Tis not, because we are ignorant of the important Nature of this Duty, and of the great Stress that is lay'd upon it in Scripture; of the Motives which invite, and of the Obligations which bind us to the Performance of it: I say, it is not on any of these Accounts, that we neglect the Practice of Charity; but because we look upon our selves, as exempted from the General Rule, by vertue of some false *Pleas* and *Pretences*, which we set up; and which I shall now, therefore, particularly enumerate, and examine: not without an Eye, all along, on those Excellent *Institutions of Charity*, which it is the peculiar Design of this Annual Solemnity to Promote, and Encourage.

I. And the First and chief Plea, under which Men generally take Shelter, is that of *Inability*.
 " Their Circumstances will not permit them to become Benefactors; the Publick Weight of *Taxes*,
 " the General *Decay of Traffick*, and some particular *Losses*, they have felt, lie heavy upon them;
 " their *Families*, and their *Creditors* do of Right lay
 " claim to all they possess; and it would be an Injury to both, should they otherwise dispose of it.
 " The Care of the Poor is not committed to Them,
 " but to the Rich, and Prosperous, and Childless. "

* Luke
xiii. 48.

Now, it is true, that from These the most bountiful Supplies are expected; These are the great Springs, that chiefly feed the general Current of Charity; for *to whom much is given, of them shall be much required* *. However, there is still a Proportion due even from Those, who are not Bless'd with their Affluence; and, before we can excuse our selves from paying it, it will behove us to consider—— Whether there be no unnecessary Expences, that we support; such, as are unsuitable to our Circumstances, and the Duties of our Rank and Station do not require; whether we are not too Magnificent and Sumptuous in our Table, and Attendance; in our Attire, and Furniture; in our Houses, and Gardens of Pleasure: Whether we do not squander away some part of our Fortune at Play, or indulge some costly Vice, which eats up all we have to spare from the reasonable Conveniencies of Life, and the just Demands of our Family. For, if any of these be the Case, we have no right to plead Inability, in respect of Works of Mercy, which our Faults, and our Follies only hinder us from promoting; but ought immediately to retrench those superfluous Expences, in order to qualify our selves for the Exercise of Charity.

The *Publick Burthens*, tho' they may be a good Reason for our not expending so much in Charity, as perhaps we might otherwise do, yet will not justify us in giving Nothing; especially, if, as those
Burthens.

Burthens increase, we take care to improve in our Frugality and Diligence; Virtues, which always become us, but more particularly in Times of War, and Publick Expence; however a dissolute People, whom God (in spight of all their Vanities and Vices) has bless'd with Success, may at present disregard them.

Our private *Losses*, and *Misfortunes*, may indeed unqualify us for Charity: but it were worth our while, seriously to reflect, whether they might not originally be in some measure owing to the want of it; I mean, whether such Losses may not have been inflicted by God, as a just Punishment of our former Avarice and Unmercifulness, when we had it more in our Power than now (and yet had it as little in our Will) to be Charitable. And if so, can we take a surer, or nearer way towards repairing those Losses, than by betaking our selves to the Practice of that Duty, the Omission of which occasion'd them? For the Lips of Truth have said; *He that giveth unto the Poor shall not lack* *. *The Liberal Soul shall be made Fat; and he that watereth, shall be watered also himself* †.

* Prov. xxviii. 27.

† Prov. xi. 25.

Our *Children and Families* have indeed a Right, to inherit our Fortunes; but not altogether in Exclusion to the Poor, who have also a Right (even God's Right) to partake of them. As, therefore, we ought not to defraud our Children, for the sake of the Poor; so neither ought we to rob the Poor of

of their Share, for the sake of our Children: for this is a kind of Sacrilege, and may prove an eating Canker, and a consuming Moth in the Estate that we leave them. Have thy Children a due Sense of Religion? They will be pleas'd, that thou hast made a Pious Disposal of such a Part of thy Fortunes, as will sanctifie and secure the rest to them: Are they Ungracious and Dissolute? Thou hast the less reason in thy Charitable Distributions to regard them; who, perhaps, when thou art gon, will be the most forward to tax thy needless Parsimony, and will spend in Riot, what was sav'd by Uncharitableness.

Out of a tender Concern, therefore, for the Welfare of thy Family; that very Concern, which makes thee shut thy Hand to the Poor; open it, and scatter among them a proper Portion of the good Things of Life; *and be not Faithless, but Believing*, that Thou, and They *shall be Blessed in thy Deed: for there is that Scattereth, and yet Increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but*

**Prov. xi. 24. it tendeth to Poverty*.*

As to the Excuse drawn from the *Demands* of Creditors, if it be real, it is unanswerable: for no Alms can be given, but out of what is properly our Own; and nothing is our Own, but what remains to us, after all our just Debts are satisfy'd. However, there is one sort of Debt, which, to whomsoever it is Owing, can only be Paid to the Poor;

I mean, when, in the course of our Dealing, we have either done Wrong ignorantly, or have afterwards forgotten the Wrong, which we at first knowingly did; or have not within our Memory, or Reach, the Persons to whom we did it. In such Cases, all the Reparation we are capable of making, is, to bestow what was thus gotten by Injustice, on proper Objects of Charity. Which is agreeable to the good Pattern set by *Zacchæus*; *Behold, Lord, says he, the half of my Goods I give to the Poor, and if I have taken any thing from any Man — I restore him four-fold* *. He resolves to make *Personal Restitution*, where the Wrong can be discover'd and the wrong'd Person reach'd; and, where they cannot, to make the best Amends in his Power, by substituting the Poor in the room of the injur'd Party. An Example, worthy to be imitated by all those, who are Conscious, or Jealous, that some unlawful Gain may (like the *Nail betwixt the Joinings of the Stones*) have stuck fast to them, *between buying and selling*. The best way of satisfying that Debt (which deserves to be consider'd as well as Other Debts) is, by casting a Sin-Offering (as it were) into some of these Publick Funds and Receptacles of Charity; which are not more useful to the Poor, than to the Rich of this great City: for if they afford the One Relief, they give the Other also (what they sometimes may, in order to the Quiet of their Consciences, equally want) an happy Opportunity of bestowing it. Hither-

* Luke
xix. 8.

Hitherto of the first Excuse for Uncharitableness, drawn from pretended *Inability*; which I have consider'd the more largely, in its several Branches, because it is, of all others, the most General and Prevailing Illusion: I proceed now to reckon up other Pleas and Pretences, which, not being of equal weight, shall be handled more briefly. For,

II. There are those that plead *Unsettled Times*, and an *Ill Prospect of Affairs* (whether wrongly, or rightly, is not the Case; but there are those that plead these things) as Impediments to the Exercise of Charity. For, in such an uncertain World, who knows, but that he may want to Morrow what he gives to Day? Who knows, what the Fate of these Publick Charities may be, which are now so fair and flourishing?

But, if this be a good Objection, it will at All Times equally hinder us from abounding in the Offices of Charity; since there is No Time, when we may not entertain such Conjectures as these, and alarm our selves with such Fears and Forebodings. *He, that observeth the Wind, shall not sow; and he, that regardeth the Clouds, shall not reap*, says the

* Eccl.
xi. 4.

Wiseman*, in this very Case, and of these very Pretences: He that too curiously observes the Face of the Heavens, and the *Signs of the Times*, will be often with-held from doing what is absolutely necessary to be done in the present Moment; and, by

missing

missing his Seed-Time, will lose the Hopes of his Harvest. And, therefore, the Counsel there given by the same Pen is, *In the Morning sow thy Seed, and in the Evening withhold not thy Hand: for thou knowest not, whether shall prosper, either this, or that; or whether they both shall be alike good**. Neglect no Opportunity of doing good, nor check thy desire of doing it, by a vain Fear of what may happen to thy self, or to Others, after thou hast done it. *It is not for thee to know the Times and the Seasons, which the Father hath put in his own Power**. This only thou knowest, that the present Season, what ever it be, is a Season of Beneficence. Do thy Duty in it, and leave the Event to Providence: for whether thy Work prosper, or not, Thou thy self shalt surely prosper for the sake of it, and not miss of thy Reward. The Blessed Jesus went about doing good, under all the discouraging Circumstances imaginable. Let us imitate his Example, and repress our Curiosity as to the Issues of things, by carrying ever in our Ears the Reproof he gave to the over-inquisitive Disciple, *What is that to thee, follow thou me**! If we will not impart the good Things of Life to others, 'till we are satisfy'd that we shall never want them our selves; we must wholly shut up our Hands, and harden our Hearts towards the Poor: for no Man, not even the most Wealthy, and Great, and Powerful among the Sons of Men, is exempt from the Chances of Human Life, and

* Eccl. xi. 6.

* Acts i. 7.

* John xxi. 22.

the Vicissitudes of Fortune. If we will not encourage publick Works of Beneficence, 'till we are secure, that no Storm shall overturn, what we help to build; there is no Room for any Exhortations to Charity, since there is no guarding against such Hazards and Accidents. However (blessed be God!) those Charities which we now meet to promote, do, of all Others, the least lye open to such Exceptions, and Surmises. For they are not New-fangled Devices of Yesterday, whercof we have had no Knowledge, no Experience; but are (most of them) as old as the Reformation it self, and have flourish'd together with it, and by it: so that, after above an Age and an half's Trial of them, we can judge surely of their useful Nature and Tendency, and safely prophesy their Continuance. They have stood the Test of all Times and Revolutions; even of such as scarce spar'd any thing that was truly Sacred and Venerable. When Sacrilegious and Rebellious Hands had *raised* the Church, *even to the Foundation thereof*, and laid the Honour of the Crown low in the Dust; yet still, struck with a Reverence for these awful Charities, they suffer'd them to stand undiminish'd, untouch'd, amidst the common Ruins: and what the Malice and Frenzy of That Time spar'd, we have Reason to hope, may continue for ever! But

III. There

III. There are many Men, sensible enough of their Obligations to Charity, and resolv'd, some time or other, to discharge them: but they desire to be excus'd from that Duty for the present, and put it off, perhaps, to a *Will*, and a *Death-Bed*, and think it sufficient, if they begin to do Good in the World, any time before they leave it. A very fatal Error! and very fruitful of ill Consequences! For a Death-Bed-Charity is no better, in its kind, than a Death-Bed-Repentance; which ought not indeed to be neglected (because it is the best thing we can do in those Circumstances,) but yet cannot be rely'd on. Seldome do Either of them proceed from a true Principle of Goodness; nor are they owing to a Love of Virtue, but to a Fear of Punishment. However, God forbid that I should condemn, or discourage either of them; any farther than is requisite to awaken us into an earlier Sense of our Duty, and of the Dangers with which such Delays are attended! Indeed, when a Man has liv'd in the Practice of Charity, he may also die in it with Comfort. But of what great Worth can that Sacrifice be, which we never had the Heart to offer, 'till it was going to be snatch'd out of our Hands? If we part with That only which we can keep no longer, *what Thank have we?* Whatsoever we employ in Charitable Uses, during our Lives, is given away from our selves; what we bequeath at our Deaths, is given from others only, our nearest

Relations, and Friends, who, else, would enjoy it. Besides, how many Testamentary Charities have been defeated, by the Negligence, or Fraud of Executors? By the Suppression of a Will? The Subornation of Witnesses, or the corrupt Sentence of a Judge? How preposterous is it, never to set about Works of Charity, whilst we our selves can see them perform'd; and then only to intend the doing them, when it will be in the Power of another, to frustrate this good Intention? Nay, but be Thou thy own Executor, in such cases, as much as is possible. Inure thy self betimes to the Love and Practice of good Deeds: for the longer Thou deferrest to be acquainted with them, the less every day Thou wilt find thy self dispos'd to them. Age it self, that weakens all other Passions and Desires, adds to our Unnatural Love of Mony; and makes us then most fondly hug and retain the good things of Life, when we have the least Prospect, our selves, of enjoying them. He only, who hath had an early Relish of the Pleasures of Beneficence, will then be persuaded to abound in it; will be *ready to give, glad to distribute*. Wherefore, teach thy self this Lesson, while it is to be taught; and begin, this very Day, to practise it, by setting apart something out of thy Stock, for the Use of some One of these Excellent Charities; which require Supplies from day to day: and why, then, if thou art not unable, and dost ever intend, shouldst thou at all defer, to bestow them? Again,

IV. It

IV. It is alledg'd, that the increase of Charity, tends often to the increasing and multiplying the Poor; and by that means, proves a Mischief to the Commonwealth, instead of a Support and Benefit. And it must be allow'd, that, with regard to our Private Distributions of Charity, there may be some truth in the Observation. The Proneness of good Men to commiserate Want, in whatsoever shape it appears, and from whatever Cause it may spring; their Easiness to relieve Cheats and Vagabonds, and to be wrought upon by the Importunities of Clamorous Beggars, are, doubtless, one reason, why our Poor are so numerous; and encourage many to depend upon the Merciful for their Support, who might otherwise seek it from their own Industry and Labour. And, therefore, of the Charity, which we this way bestow, much, I fear, is misapply'd; and I would far rather be an Advocate for the Retrenchment, than the Increase of it. But in our *Publick* Charities, (such particularly, as adorn this great City, and beautify this Solemnity) there is no danger of Excess; no room to fear, lest, by the overflowing Bounty of Benefactors, they should ever swell beyond the Necessities of Those, who have a real Occasion for them. For they are not like the Charitable Foundations in the Church of *Rome*, whose Number, Wealth, and dazzling Splendor, exceeds all the Demands, and the Design of Charity, and raises Envy rather

rather than Compassion, in the Breasts of Beholders. These are, indeed, superfluous Charities; Conveniences to private Persons, but of no real Advantage to the Publick: instead of being Receptacles for the truly Poor, they tempt Men to pretend Poverty, in order to share the Advantages of them. The Charitable Institutions, for which I plead, are of another Nature and Tendency; Calculated, not for Ostentation, but Use; to answer the chief Ends of Human Life, and the necessary Wants of Human Nature: and the more, therefore, they are enlarg'd, the more useful still will they be; nor can the Liberal Hand ever be too Liberal in supplying them. At least, that cannot happen, 'till some Ages hence; when, therefore, it will be time enough to enter on such a Consideration. The

Vth and Last thing (I shall mention) by which we are apt to excuse our Backwardness to good Works, is, The Ill Success, that hath been observ'd to attend well-design'd Charities; with relation both to the *Objects*, on which they are plac'd, and the *Hands*, through which they are convey'd. The first do often prove unworthy of our Bounty, and the latter may sometimes divert and misapply it. But, what then? Shall we be discourag'd from any Attempt of doing good, by the Possibility of our failing in it? How many of the best things, that
were

were ever done for the World, would, at this rate, have been left unattempted? Our part is, to chuse out the most deserving Objects, and the most likely to answer the Ends of our Charity; and when that is done, all is done, that lyes in our Power: the rest must be left to Providence. What we bestow on these Occasions, is given by us, not *as unto Men, but as unto God*; for his Sake, and in obedience to his Commands. And, with him, the Value of our Gift depends not on the Success of it: for it is true, in this Sense also, what the Apostle affirms, *That, if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted, according to that a Man hath, and not according to that he hath not* *—according to that a Man hath, i. e. a sincere Intention of doing good; and not according to that he hath not in his Power, the effectual Accomplishment of that Intention. Shall We repine at a little misplac'd Charity, We, who could no way foresee the effect; when an All-knowing, All-wise Being, (whom it is our Duty, and our Happiness, to imitate) showers down every day his Benefits on the Unthankful and Undeserving? For he *maketh his Sun to rise on the Evil and on the Good, and sendeth Rain on the Just and on the Unjust* *. He hath blessed Us, even Us, the most Sinful and Ungrateful People in the World, with Victory, and Triumphs, and a near prospect of Peace, beyond, not only our Deserts, but our very Hopes, and

* 2 Cor. viii. 12.

* Matth. v. 45.

and without any Probability of our employing these Blessings to the good Purposes, for which they were intended—I mean, the Advancement of His Glory, and the Salvation of our Own Souls. *Be ye, therefore, merciful, as your heavenly Father also is merciful;**

*Mat. v. 48. even to Objects, that may, perhaps, prove unworthy of your Bounty, and never answer the Design of it. And yet this I must say, in behalf of several of those Ways of Well-doing, which are now recommended to you, that they are, of all others, most likely to attain their End, and to bring forth Fruit; Those, I more particularly mean, which relate to the *Education of Poor Children*. For the force of Education is so great, that, by the means of it, we may mould the Minds and Manners of the Young into what Shape, what Form almost we please; and give them the Impressions of such Habits, as shall ever afterwards remain: And, therefore, in the promoting of This sort of Charity, we act under the pleasing View, and, indeed, under the utmost Assurance of Success; if a due care be but taken by Those, who have the Conduct of Our Bounty. And it is a certain Proof, that such a Care hath always been taken by the Worthy Governors of These, and the Rest of the City-Charities; that they have thriven, and prosper'd gradually from their Infancy, down to this very day: as they could never have done, if the Integrity, and Prudence, and Godly Zeal of those, by whom they were administred, had not been

as conspicuous all along, as the Excellence and Usefulness of the Charities themselves. To this wise Management it is owing, that the Stream of Beneficence, which at first was not great, hath, by several Rivulets, which have since fallen into it, in its Course, wonderfully enlarg'd its Current, and grown wider and deeper still, the farther it hath flow'd. Even at this day there are not wanting Some, who, struck with the Beauty and Usefulness of these Charities, and observing the Care and Fidelity with which they are directed, break through all the Difficulties and Obstructions that now lye in the way towards advancing them. Notwithstanding the General Decay of Traffick, and the growing weight of Taxes, and the many Rival-Charities which have been lately Erected; notwithstanding an Universal Dissolution of Manners under which we groan; notwithstanding the prevalence of Infidelity and Prophaneness, and of that Irreligious Scorn, with which good Men, and good Designs are now publicly treated; yet still, I say, there are Some, who please themselves in patronizing and encouraging these useful Designs, and in rendring them every day more Useful, and more Amiable. May God continue the Zeal of such Persons, and increase their Number!

It will, I am persuaded, conduce to this End, to have a true Account of the present State and Wants

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of

of the several Foundations of Charity, belonging to this City, now laid before you.

Here the REPORT was read.

You have heard, what the present Condition, and Exigencies of these several Charities are; and I doubt not, but you are dispos'd, and resolv'd, according to your several Abilities, to do somewhat towards the Supply of them. Your own merciful Temper, and the Application, I have already made, of what has been offer'd, under each particular Head of Discourse, might render a solemn and form'd Exhortation needless. You are thoroughly acquainted with the Extensive Nature and Influence of these Admirable Designs; and possess with a true Sense of their Beauty, and Usefulness: You have a near and daily Experience of the Uprightness, Wisdom, and Frugality with which they are conducted; The pityable Persons, reliev'd in these several ways, are constantly under your Eye, and Observation; and therefore I do, in their behalf, appeal to your own Knowledge, and very Senses, which persuade more powerfully than any Arguments: If the moving Objects themselves, with which you familiarly converse, be not eloquent enough to raise Compassion, mere Words, I fear, will scarce be effectual. However, for the sake of those, who have not such affecting
Oppor-

Opportunities, and yet may be well-inclin'd to Works of Mercy; somewhat I shall say of the several Instances of Charity, to which the *Report* (now read to you) refers.

There is a Variety in the Tempers even of good Men, with relation to the different Impressions they receive from different Objects of Charity. Some Persons are more easily and sensibly touch'd by one sort of Objects, and some by another: But there is no Man, who, in the variety of Charities now propos'd, may not meet with that which is best suited to his Inclination, and which of all others he would most desire to promote and cherish. For here are the Wants of grown Men, and Children; of the Soldier, the Seaman, and the Artificer; of the Dis-eas'd, the Maim'd, and the Wounded; of Distract-ed Persons, and Condemn'd Criminals; of sturdy wandring Beggars, and loose disorderly Livers; nay, of those who counterfeit Wants of all kinds, while they really want nothing but due Correction and hard Labour; at one view, represented to you. And, surely, scarce any Man, who hath an Heart capable of Tender-ness, can *come and look on* all these sad Spectacles at once; and then *pass by on the Other side*, without extending a merciful Hand to relieve any of them.

Some may delight in building for the Use of the Poor; others in Feeding, and Clothing them, and in taking care

that Manual Arts be taught them: Some, in providing Physick, Discipline, or Exercise for their Bodies; others, in procuring the Improvement of their Minds by useful Knowledge: Some may please themselves in redressing the Mischiefs occasion'd by the wicked Poor; others, in preventing those Mischiefs, by securing the Innocence, of Children and by imparting to them the unvaluable Blessing of a Virtuous and Pious Education: Finally, Some may place their chief satisfaction in giving secretly what is to be distributed; Others, in being the open and avow'd Instruments of making and inspecting such Distributions. And whoever is particularly dispos'd to any one, or more of these Methods of Beneficence, may (I say) within the Compass of those different Schemes of Charity, which have been propos'd, find room enough to exercise his Christian Compassion. To go over them particularly —

Hast thou been Educated in the Fear of God, and a strict Practice of Virtue? Was thy tender Age fenc'd and guarded every way from Infection by the Care of wise Parents and Masters? And shall not a grateful Relish of thy own great Felicity in that Respect, render thee Ready and Eager to procure the same Happiness for Others, who equally need it? Shall it not make thee the Common Guardian as it were, of Poor Orphans, whose Minds are
left

left as Uncloath'd and Naked altogether, as their Bodies ; and who are expos'd to all the Temptations of Ignorance, Want, and Idleness ?

Art thou a true Lover of thy Country ? Zealous for its Religious and Civil Interests ? and a cheerful Contributor to all those Publick Expences which have been thought necessary to secure them, against the Attempts of the Common Enemy and Oppressor ? is the near Prospect of all the Blessings of Peace welcome and desirable to thee ? and wilt thou not bear a tender Regard to all those, who have lost their Health and their Limbs in the rough Service of War, to secure these Blessings to thee ? Canst thou see any one of them lye by the way, as it were, *stripp'd, and wounded, and half-dead* ; and yet *pass by on the other side*, without doing as much for thy Friend, as that good Samaritan did for his Enemy, when he had *Compassion on him*, and *went to him and bound up his Wounds, pouring in Oyle and Wine, and brought him to an Inn* (or House of Common Reception ; for the Word, *καὶ ὡς ἐποίησεν*, signifies) *and took care of him* ?

Have thy reasoning Faculties been eclips'd at any Time by some accidental Stroke ? by the mad Joys of Wine, or the Excess of Religious Melancholy ? by a Fit of an Apoplexy, or the Rage of a burning Fever ? and hast Thou, upon thy Recovery, been made sensible, to what a wretched State that Calamity

lamity reduc'd thee? and what a sad Spectacle, to all thy Friends and Acquaintance, it render'd thee? And shall not this Affliction, which thou hast felt thy self, or perhaps observ'd in others, who were near and dear to thee; shall it not lead thee to Commiserate all Those, who labour under a settled Distraction? who are shut out from all the Pleasures and Advantages of Human Commerce, and even degraded from the rank of Reasonable Creatures? Wilt thou not make Their Case, Thine? and take Pity upon Them, who cannot take Pity upon themselves? Wilt thou not contribute, to the best of thy Power, either towards restoring the defac'd Image of God upon their Souls; or (if that cannot be done) towards supporting them, for a while, under a Charitable Confinement, where human Nature may be rescu'd from that Contempt, to which such Objects expose it?

Once more; Hast thou suffer'd at any time by Vagabonds and Pilferers? hath the Knowledge, or Opinion of thy Wealth expos'd thee to the Attempts of more dangerous and bloody Villains? have thy unquiet Slumbers been interrupted by the Apprehension of nightly Assaults, such as have terrify'd, and perhaps ruin'd some of thy unfortunate Neighbours? Learn from hence duly to esteem and promote those useful Charities, which remove such Pests of human Society into Prisons and Work-Houses,

Houses, and train up Youths in the Ways of Diligence, who would otherwise take the same desperate Courses: which reform the Stubborn by Correction, and the Idle by hard Labour; and would, if carry'd to that Perfection of which they are capable, go a great way towards making Life more comfortable than now it is, and Property it self more valuable.

These are the several Ways of Beneficence, which you are now call'd upon to Practise. Many Arguments might be urg'd, to induce You to it: but I am sensible, I detain You too long; and, therefore, shall use but One; however such an one, as is equal to many, and cannot but have great Weight with all that call themselves Christians. It is this— That our Blessed Saviour went before us, in the Practice of every One of these *Four* Instances of well doing, which I have now recommended to You.

His Compassion and Benignity towards *little Children* is observ'd by all the Evangelists; and with such Circumstances, as shew, that he laid great Stress upon this kind of Charity, and did, in a peculiar manner, recommend it to all his Followers. For, when *his Disciples rebuked those, who brought Young Children unto him, he was much displeas'd, and said unto them, Suffer the little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the Kingdom of God.* Verily

*xxv. 9. 5th
John*

* Mark
x. 13, 14,
15, 16.

*Verily, I say unto you; Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God, as a little Child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his Arms, put his Hands upon them, and blessed them**. It was impossible for him to have shew'd a greater Tenderness and Concern for the Infant-State, than by what he said, and did, on this Occasion. And, lest we should still be apt to disdain such humble Offices, and not to think them of Importance sufficient to employ our Thoughts; he farther assures us, that the Care of these *Little ones* is committed to *ministring Spirits*, who attend continually on this *very Thing* — *I say unto you, that in Heaven their Angels do always behold the Face of my Father which is in Heaven**. And we cannot, surely, think it beneath us, to share with those glorious Beings, in such an Administration!

* Mat.
xviii. 10.

* John ix.
4.

As to the Cure of the *Diseas'd*, the *Maim'd* and the *Infirm*, it was his familiar and every Day's Employment; *I must work the Works of him that sent me* (says he, in relation to these *very Cures*) *whilst it is Day; The Night cometh, when no Man can work**: and, therefore, the very last Miracle he did, before his Day of working expir'd, and he left this World, was, the healing the Ear of the high Priest's Servant, whom St. Peter had wounded.

His Compassion towards the *Distracted* and *Lunatick*, appears in divers Instances: for Such many of

of those *Demoniacks*, seem to have been, whom he heal'd in great Numbers. The Descriptions, which the Evangelists give of these wretched Objects, and of the several Symptoms with which their Maladies were attended, are very particular and moving; and shew, that both our Blessed Lord, and the Holy Pen-Men of his Story, were deeply affected with them. Hear the Account, given by *St. Mark*, of one Instance of this kind; *the Man with an unclean Spirit, whose Name was Legion! He had his dwelling among the Tombs, and no Man could bind him, no not with Chains; because he had been often bound with Fetters and Chains, and the Chains had been pluck'd asunder by him, and the Fetters broken in Pieces; neither could any Man tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the Mountains, and in the Tombs, crying, and cutting himself with Stones.* Our Saviour took pity on him; and we find him soon afterwards *sitting at Jesus Feet, clothed, and in his right mind**.

Nay, He himself was pleas'd to set us a Pattern also of that severe Charity, which consists in *Corporal Punishment and Correction*. For, when he saw the outward Court of the Temple profan'd by ungodly Merchandize, He, who was Meekness and Mildness it self, *made a Scourge of small Cords, and drove these buyers and sellers out of the Temple, and overthrew their Tables**. This he is expressly said to

* Mark
V. 2, 3, 4,
&c.

* John xi.
15.

have done, at two several Passovers; and with so remarkable a Degree of Holy Warmth and Indignation, as made his Disciples apply to him what the Psalmist had said, *The Zeal of thine House hath*

* John xi. *eaten me up* *!

17.

You see, Brethren, what a Divine Warrant you have, for abounding in all those Offices of Charity, which are this day propos'd to you; and which the Saviour of the World did not himself in Person disdain to exercise. If, therefore, there be any Consolation in Christ, if any Comfort of Love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any Bowels, and

* Phil. xi.
1.

Mercies; fulfil ye * the Work, to which ye are invited, and appointed; *Look not every Man on his own Things, but every Man also on the things of another! Let this Mind be in you, which was also in*

* Ib. iv. 5.

Christ Jesus *; who did (as you have heard) in every Instance, what you are exhorted to do; and, by so doing, left us an Example, that we should follow his steps! Let us look up to him, not only as the Author and Finisher of our Faith, but as the perfect Rule and Measure of our Obedience; remembering, and applying, those few, but Emphatical Words, with which he concludes the Parable of the good Samaritan, from whence my Text is taken; *Go thou, and do likewise.* Which God of his infinite Mercy Grant, &c.



FINIS.